1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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The most interesting of the Andamanese domestic utensils is undoubtedly the cooking-pot. Pots are made in all parts of the Andamans where suitable clay is to be found. The clay is obtained and is freed as far as possible from stones and gritty matter with the hands. It is then moistened with water and kneaded on a board consisting of a portion of a broken canoe. It is worked very stiff and after kneading is rolled beneath the palm of the hand into long thin rolls. These are built up into a pot by coiling, the requisite degree of thickness being obtained by pressure of the thumb and first finger. When the pot has been built up to the required size and shape, the surface, inside and out, is moistened and is scraped over in all directions with an *Arca* shell. The pot is dried in the sun for a few hours and is then baked by placing inside and around it pieces of burning wood. The pot often cracks in the baking, and another has to be made.

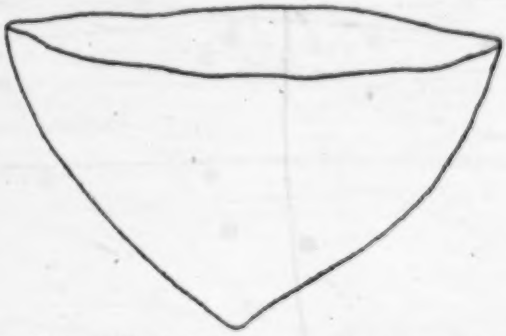

Fig. 38. Shape of North Andaman pot; actual diameter 17 cm.

In the North Andaman the pots are made with pointed bottoms, and are generally small, the largest having a capacity of only six or seven pints. They are made by women only. In the South Andaman the pots have rounded bottoms and, on the average, are larger and thicker than those of the North Andaman. They are made by both men and women, the best being made by men. In the Little Andaman the pots are larger, and, particularly, deeper than those of the South Andaman, and have somewhat pointed bottoms. The pots of the Jarawa are similar to those of the Little Andaman.

In the North Andaman pots are not ornamented, but in the South Andaman they are decorated with usually simple patterns of dots and lines made with a small pointed stick. The Little Andaman pots that I have seen were not decorated.

[531]

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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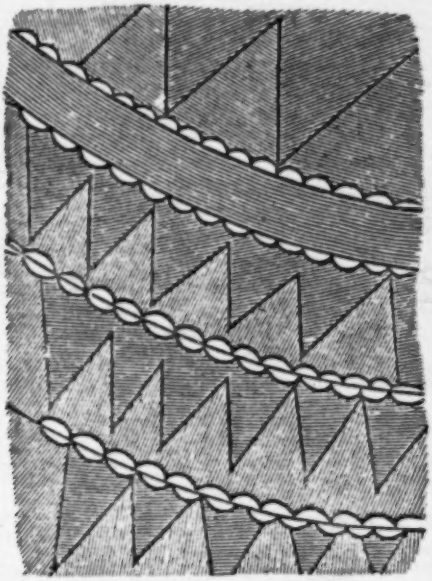
XI. VANDYKES WITH SCOLLOPED BANDS AND CROSS LINES (? *ig-pòi'nyakŋga-*).



Painted with *kâ'ngatâ-bŭj-* on *ó'do-*[1]

Pottery.—1. These savages evince a superiority over the Australians, Tasmanians, Fuegeans, and many of the Pacific Islanders, in possessing some knowledge of the art of making pots. 323 172

2. It was formerly believed that they had "no vessel capable of resisting the action of fire,"[2] but careful examination of their kitchen-middens has proved, beyond all doubt, that their present manufacture was equalled—if indeed it were not surpassed—many generations ago by their ancestors; the traditions current among them on the subject may also be mentioned, in passing, as pointing to a like conclusion.

3. The late Dr. Stoliczka, in his interesting paper on the Andamanese kitchen-middens,[3] writes as follows:—"In submitting the rude fragments of pottery . . . to an archæologist in Europe, no one would long hesitate in referring them to the

[1] *Nautilus* shell, used as a drinking vessel.

[2] *Vide* Symes, who is also incorrect in adding in a footnote: "The fragments of earthenware vessels mentioned by Mr. Colebrooke were probably brought from the Nicobars or from the Continent, by the boats that often visit the Andamans for the purpose of taking the nests before mentioned" (*i.e.*, of the *Collocalia nidifica*).

[3] *Vide* Proceedings As. Soc. Bengal, January, 1870.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Plate A.

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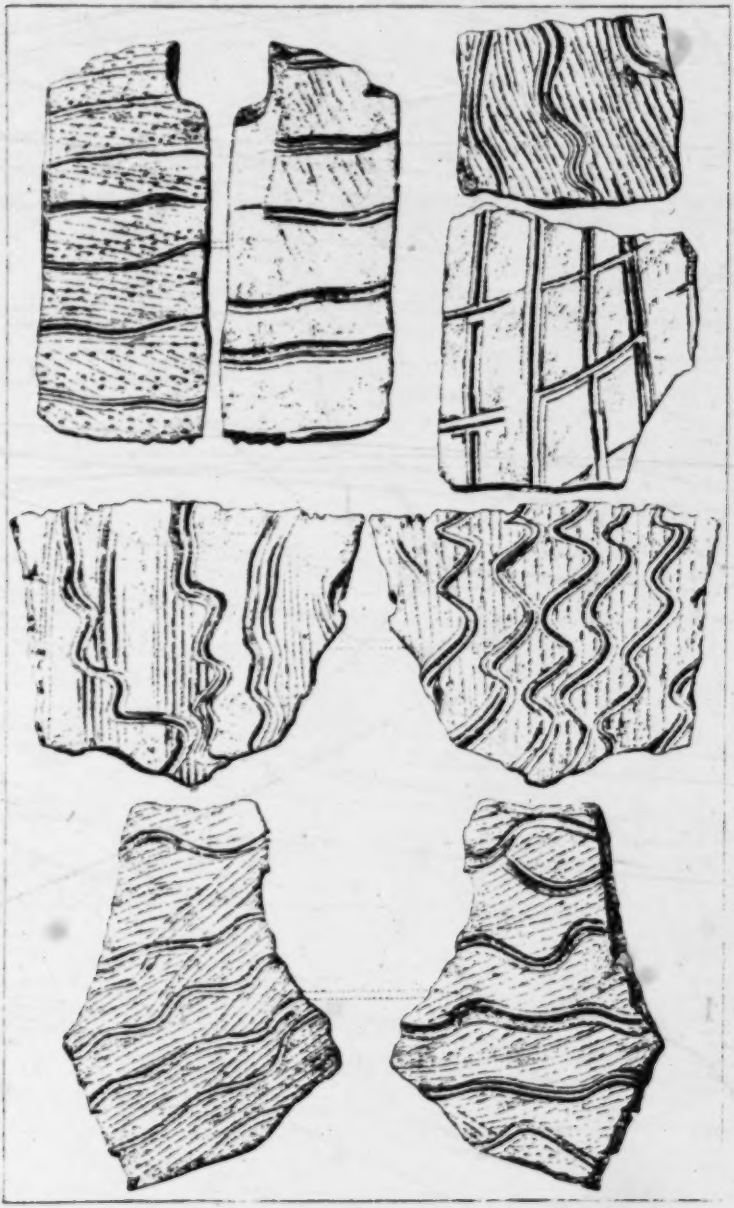

FRAGMENTS OF ANDAMANESE ORNAMENTED POTTERY

From a Kitchen-midden in Port Blair Harbour.

B

[facing p. 154]

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

323 172 stone age, at least to the neolithic period; for, indeed, they are almost identical with the fragments of pottery found in the Danish kitchen-middens, though here fragments of pottery are comparatively very rare."

323 4. The manufacture of pots (*būj-*[1]) is not confined to any particular class, or to either sex, but the better specimens are generally produced by men, and though the result is in neither case very satisfactory as regards appearance, they yet answer the purpose for which they are intended very fairly,[2] and frequently serve as objects of barter among the various communities.

5. They invariably use, unmixed with any other substance, a particular description of clay called by them *būj-pâ-*, which is only found in a few places, where, of course, the work is usually carried on: the method pursued is similar to that practised by the Kaffirs, and the only implements employed are a short pointed stick, an *Arca* shell (the variety called *pō·rma-*), and a board, which is generally either a sounding board (*pū·kuta-yem·nga-*[3]), or, if sufficiently large, an eating tray (*pū·kuta-yât-māk·nga-*[4]).

6. As nothing of the character of a potter's wheel is known among them, the shape of the vessels depends upon the skill of the operator and upon the correctness of his eye. The first step in the process of making a pot is to remove any stones that are in the clay, which is then moistened with water and kneaded until it is of a proper consistency; several lumps are next rolled out in succession on the board, by means of the fingers and palms, into strips of about fifteen inches long and half-an-inch thick: one of these is now twisted by the artist into a cup-like shape,[5] in order to form the base of the pot, which he proceeds to build up, taking care the while to exert sufficient pressure to ensure a uniform thickness, by adding one roll above another, each one commencing where the last ended, until the required dimensions are attained; then, if it be sufficiently firm and consolidated, an *Arca* shell is carefully passed (*ngâ·tanga-*) over the inner and outer surfaces, which are thus rendered smoother, and are at the same time freed from any minute bits of stone that had previously escaped observation; the serrated edges of the

[1] *Vide* Appendix B, item 18.
[2] *Vide ante* "Food," paragraphs 12, 21, and 27.
[3] *Vide* Appendix B, item 19.
[4] *Vide* Appendix B, item 72.
[5] The pots made by the *.yē·rewa-* and *.jăr·awa-* tribes (*i.e.*, North and Little Andaman) have up to the present time been found to have a more pointed base than those of the five *.bō·jig* tribes, but I believe no Andaman pot intended for cooking purposes has yet been made of such a shape as to allow of its standing. The small cup- (or sometimes saucer-) like pots (*vide* Plate VII, fig. 19*a*) are used for making and warming *kâ·ngatâ-būj-*.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

323 shell also impart a more finished appearance to the vessel ere it is further engraved (*ō·inga-*) on both surfaces[1] in wavy, checked, or striped designs,[2] not, as has been assumed,[3] by the finger-nail, but by means of the pointed stick before mentioned. The potter then places the utensil in the sun to dry, or, if the weather be wet or cloudy, before a fire, taking care to alter its position from time to time so that all parts may be equally subjected to heat. When sufficiently hardened, he bakes it thoroughly by placing burning pieces of wood both inside and around the vessel; occasionally during this process the pot cracks, which of course renders it useless, but if this does not happen it is allowed to cool, and is then considered ready for use.

323 415 7. With good management a pot is ordinarily fit for use by the close of the day on which it is made. They may be said to be all of one quality and to differ only in size so as to be suitable for the use of a single family or a large party. The largest description is usually only to be seen in permanent encampments, the smaller kinds being taken when occasion arises for a migration, as for instance on account of a death,[4] or because arrangements have been made for an entertainment at some other place.[5] The medium size is almost invariably provided with a rough basket-work casing, which not only renders it more portable but also serves to protect it, in some measure, from the many accidents to which it is liable.

[285]

8. The pots ordinarily made will hold about nine pints, but the larger kinds possess double this capacity, while others again are no larger than half an ordinary cocoanut-shell; these last are employed in making *kā·ngatā-būj-*, and also when using it;[6] with this exception none of the vessels are reserved or manufactured for any special purpose, but serve alike for all times, whether for festivals, migrations, or ordinary occasions. No substitutes for

[1] Perhaps the original object of this practice may be explained by the conjecture contained in the following extract from Peschel's work:—"In examining the site of an old pottery manufactory of the Red Indians on the Cahokia, ... Carl Rau discovered half-finished vessels, that is to say, baskets of rushes or willow, lined inside with clay. When the vessel was baked the fire naturally consumed the external covering. . . . That the Europeans of prehistoric times also originally lined basket-work with clay, may be inferred from the decorations of vessels of the stone age. These decorations consist merely of rows of marks made with the finger-nail, as if to represent the traces left by the basket-work. When some bold individual began to shape the clay by hand, his earthen vessels were perhaps regarded as not genuine, or of inferior quality, as they had not originated in the time-honoured fashion; in order to meet these doubts he may have counterfeited the impressions of the rushes with his nail."

[2] *Vide* Plate V, for illustration of these.

[3] *Vide* de Roepstorff.

[4] *Vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraphs 4 and 15.
Vide post "Games and Amusements," paragraph 22.

[5] *Vide* Appendix B, item 62.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

323 415 pottery are in use, as has been supposed,[1] unless the fact of certain molluscs[2] being cooked in their shells can be so described. Broken pottery is not buried in graves or beneath landmarks, but is cast aside as rubbish.

9. No kind of painting or varnishing is ever attempted, and models of men or animals are never made. They are also ignorant of glazing and of making porous pottery for cooling vessels.

412 **Natural Forms and Miscellaneous Manufactures.**—1. The natural forms of stones are employed by the Andamanese, as by other savage tribes, as anvils and hammers. Like the natives of New Guinea,[3] they always carry with them, or keep ready for use, one or more *Cyrena* shells (*ūta-*), as these serve them in a great variety of ways: for example, in *dressing* and *preparing* the wooden portion of their arrows; in *sharpening* their bamboo and cane[4] knives, and the inner edge of the boar's tusk, in order to adapt it for use as a plane; as a *spoon*,[5] in eating gravy, &c.; as a *knife*, in cutting thatching leaves, &c., and in severing the joints of meat; and as a *scraper* in separating the pulp from the fibre of the *Anodendron paniculatum* and other plants, from which they manufacture their various descriptions of string and cord; these shells are likewise employed in making the ornamental incisions in their weapons, implements, leaf-ornaments, &c.,[6] in preparing the peculiar *ūj-*[7] appendage (worn when dancing); and they are also frequently used for planing purposes.[8] Indeed, I think I may fairly say that among their savage arts there is probably nothing so calculated to surprise and interest a stranger as the many and clever uses to which necessity has taught them to put this simple but highly effective tool.

[1] This refers to the following passage in the late Dr. Stoliczka's "Note on the Kjökken-Möddings of the Andaman Islands";—"I have been informed that in some parts of the island their only cooking utensils are large specimens of *Turbo marmoratus*, valves of *Tridacna gigas*, and others."

[2] Viz.:—*Cyrena*, *Arca*, *Mytilus smaragdinus*, *Ceritheum*, *Patella variabilis* (limpet), and a few other small varieties.

[3] "They always carry with them a bamboo knife; . . . when required they sharpen the edge with a shell (a fresh water species of *Cyrena*), which is always carried for the purpose. . . ." (See a paper on the natives of the Fly River, New Guinea, by Signor L. M. d'Albertis, in the Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. vi, p. 215, 1876).

[4] Like the Tahitians and Fijians of former times they have also been in the habit of using bamboo knives; these are made of the outside of a piece of bamboo, are shaped into form while green, and are then dried and charred so as to render them as hard and sharp as possible.

[5] "The mussel-shell suggested the first idea of the spoon, and still performs its functions on the Atlantic shores of Morocco" (Peschel).

[6] *Vide* "Ornamentation," paragraph 2.

[7] *Vide* Appendix B, item 76.

[8] It has already been mentioned under "Food" (paragraph 8) that the *Cyrena* is also used in opening other bivalves.

619 now passing away and I well recollect 25 years ago, though the Bojigyab were then known to us, the "coming in" of the first Balawa from the Archipelago and of the first Chariar from the extreme north and the difficulty experienced in communicating with them.

In reading the following remarks on the tribes it must always be borne in mind that the statements therein made refer largely to a state of things practically already passed away and never likely to be revived. The reader can without difficulty use his discretion in separating what is from what has been in the course of his perusal.

619 184 **Their Division into three Groups.**—The Andamanese tribes are by themselves divided into three distinct groups, having certain salient characteristics: the forms of the huts, bows and arrows, of the canoes, of ornamentation, female clothing, hair dressing, and utensils, of tattooing, and of language common generally to the group, but differing in details and sometimes entirely from those of other groups. Judged by this standard the tribal affinities may be thus stated: Northern or Yerewa Group, Chariar, Kora, Tabo, Yere, Kede; Southern or Bojigngiji Group, Bea, Balawa, Bojigyab, Juwai, Kol; Outer Group, Ông-Jarawa, who do not tattoo. Some of the tribes are divided into septs, fairly well defined under headmen and with a local area of their own, but not under any separate designation.

The Distinctions between the Groups.—It is worth while bringing together this remarkable series of differences dividing the Andamanese into three divisions; differences that more or less run through all matters concerning them.

[304] (1) *Tattooing.*—Bojigngiji; women are the tattooers cutting the skin slightly with small flakes of quartz or glass in patterns of zigzags or in straight vertical lines; face, ears, genitals, arm and knee pits are excepted. Men and women are tattooed alike. Yerewa; men are the tattooers, cutting the skin deeply with iron pig-arrow heads: short horizontal parallel cuts in three or five lines down the back and front of the trunk, round the anus and legs. Women are tattooed thus as life advances. Ông-Jarawa; no tattooing.

[302] (2) *Hair.*—Bojigngiji; partial to complete shaving of head. Yerewa; long matted ringlets touching the shoulders. Ông-Jarawas; closely cropped head to a mop. Ông-Jarawa women are not shaved.

[291] (3) *Ornaments and female clothing.*—Bojigngiji women wear a bunch of five or six leaves in front: Yerewa women a loose tassel of narrow strips of bark: Ông-Jarawa a bunching tassel of fibre. Bojigngiji women are most particular as to clothing: Yerewa women careless. Jarawa women are apt to be quite unclothed. Bojigngijis and Yerewas smear their faces with grey clay mixed with water, white clay in delicate patterns imitating the tattoo marks, red ochre mixed with turtle fat and almond oil in coarse undefined patterns. Ông-Jarawas, with yellow clay mixed with water in coarse patches, red ochre mixed with the above mentioned oils on the head. Ông-Jarawas wear no bone ornaments.

[302]

[531] (4) *Ornamentation of utensils.*—Bojigngiji and Yerewas, slight: Ông-Jarawas delicate and elaborate.

●[323] (5) *Pots.*—Bojigngijis, pots with rounded bottom: Ông-Jarawas and Yerewas with pointed bottom.

[412] (6) *Implements.*—Bojigngijis and Yerewas, coarse and rough in manufacture: Ông-Jarawas, often delicate and neat.

[285] (7) *Baskets.*—Bojigngijis and Yerewas have a 'kick' and stand well: Ông-Jarawas have uneven bottom and stand badly.

[411] (8) *Bows and arrows.*—Bojigngiji, *karama* bow and large arrows. Yerewa, *chokio* bow and small arrows. Ông-Jarawa, curved long bow and long arrows.

(9) *Arrows.*—Generally common in type to all tribes: long with plain straight point, long with straight point and barbs, short with broad detachable barbed head for pigs.* Ông-Jarawas and Yerewas, multiple headed arrows for fish.

(10) *Harpoons.*—For turtle, dugongs, and large fish among Bojigngijis and Yerewas: none among the Ông-Jarawas.

* As the pig runs off, the trailing shaft is at once caught by something in the jungle and the animal is thus brought up short.

765 neck, usually, but not always, by the widow, widower or nearest relative. Mourning closes with a ceremonial dance and the removal of the clay. The ceremonies connected with the disposal of the dead are conventional, reverential and by no means without elaboration in detail.

V. Arts.

324 **Stone Implements.**—The only stone cutting implement known to the Andamanese is the quartz flake chipped off, never worked, and held between the fingers for shaving and tattooing, and shells and fish bones are used for the small blades of the peculiar adze of this people, and for arrow points, scraping and cutting. A *cyrena* valve is the ordinary knife and scraper. Hammers, anvils, hones, and oven-stones consist of natural stones. They have never made celts.

177 The ends of glass bottles for some years, and iron from wrecks for a long time past, have been substituted for the indigenous implements, when and where procurable. The object of the long series of murderous raids made by the inland Jarawas on the outlying parts of the Penal Settlement has now been proved to have been made in search for iron. The implements on the whole are coarsely and roughly made.

411 **Weapons.**—The weapons of the Andamanese are bow and arrow, harpoon, fish spear, pig spear, and they have never had any notion of poisoning the blades, which however sometimes inflict dangerous septic wounds from dirt, though as a rule they are kept bright as a matter of pride. Barbed arrows and harpoons with loose heads are used for catching and pulling up game in the jungles and marking where turtle or large fish are sinking.

Domestic Arts.—Excellent information with illustrations on the domestic and other arts of the Andamanese is to be found in a minutely accurate work, Man's *Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands.*

283 **String and Netting.**—String for nets and all purposes is twisted, often neatly, from the inner bark of creepers. Large nets of this string are made for driving turtle and hand-nets for prawns and small fish and for wallets. Stout cord is made from the inner bark of the *melochia velutina.* Whole, split and scraped canes are used as binders.

285 **Weaving.**—The weaving is good, neat and stout, and baskets and mats are thus well made from strips of canes.

323 **Pottery.**—The unglazed circular clay cooking pots with rounded or pointed bottoms, to the Andamanese very valuable, are built up by hand, sun-dried and then baked, but not thoroughly, in the fire. They are often encased in basket work for safety. Their manufacture, form and ornament are typical of the Stone Age generally.

322 **Wood and Cane work.**—Buckets are hollowed out of wood or cut from the joints of the bamboo. Canoes are hollowed out of whole trunks of light, soft timber by the adze without the use of fire, do not last long and are only fair sea boats. They are however capable of holding many people and a good deal of light cargo.

301 **Ornamentation, Personal and Domestic.**—The personal ornaments made are—bunches and strips of fibres and leaves scraped, cut and hammered, fringes of dentalium shells and straw-coloured wreaths of hammered and roasted dendrobium bark. The bones, skulls and jawbones of deceased relatives are also used whole, or broken and scraped to fancy or requirement, as ornaments, besides necklaces of the bones of animals. Tattooing and painting the body are only ornamental to the extent that, in the latter case especially, deviations from the conventional designs are due to personal taste.

353 The only ornaments to dwellings and huts are the heads of turtle, pigs, iguana, paradoxurus killed in hunting. These are hung up partly as ornaments and partly as trophies, but not with any idea of record.

531 Every manufactured article has its own customary conventional line ornament in one or more of three colours and in one or more of eleven patterns approximately achieved only. The colours are red, white and brown from natural earths. The patterns are (1) chevrons, (2) close cross hatch, (3) wide cross hatch, (4) parallel lines, (5) parallels and chevrons combined, (6) lozenges, (7) plait or guilloche, (8) herring-bone, (9) cross cuts, (10) loops, (11) vandyke with scolloped bands and cross lines.

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

312 caracases of small animals. During the droughts, marine hermit crabs, of
271 which a profusion is found in Little Andaman even far from the sea-shore,
[196] often choose to die in fresh-water pools. They are not removed from the pools.
[415] A nautilus shell is sometimes used as a drinking vessel ; failing this, the Onge
[516] lap up the water like animals, on all fours, directly from the pool. Since they are
291 very fond of dogs, man and dog drink together from the same tiny pool, often holding no more than a few pints of water. Dogs reached Great Andaman as early as 1857 ; they came to Little Andaman much later. Before that time there were no dogs in the Andamanese Archipelago. They soon became the natives' cherished and much appreciated assistants in the hunting of wild pigs. Many unhygienic habits followed the appearance of dogs in the Andamans.

271 The Onge have no idea of boiling water for the purpose of disinfection ;
[147] nevertheless their health does not appear to suffer at all as a result of the pol-
123 luted water they drink. When, in 1952, I dug a well near the left bank of Dugong Creek on the north-east coast of Little Andaman, I was compelled to fence it in so as to prevent dogs from drinking it and bathing in it.

264 Dogs lick everything that smells of food, including the cooking pots,
[231] and the pots are not washed before use after the dogs have licked them.
[136] Swarms of flies of different species and small coleoptera of a brilliant blue colour, one of them 6 mms long, follow the dogs after they have "cleaned" the pots by licking them. They line the inside of the pots with a crawling, living coat, moving restlessly around in search of food. One species of fly, which is of a brilliant, metallic green colour, has a peculiarly disagreeable smell. All the flies lay eggs while feeding, but the eggs are soon devoured by the hovering bluish coleoptera. Thus in a few hours all traces of organic matter disappear from the pots. Subsequent exposure to fire undoubtedly destroys the germs that would otherwise be certainly dangerous to human beings.

415 The Onge no longer use indigenous pottery for cooking. Its disappearance
177 is recent, as the sherds that litter Little Andaman prove to the investigator.
[323] Excavation in modern kitchen-middens leads to the same conclusion. During the last war, quantities of empty petrol drums were washed up on the Andaman shores. They were found in such numbers that the Onge have not yet used them all up : after 1952 I found several of these containers abandoned, untouched, in the jungle. The primitive inhabitants sawed each container in two cylindrical halves, thus transforming them into cooking pots. The result was that within a few years the fragile ancestral pottery of the Onge disappeared altogether. Furthermore, aluminium pots were distributed among the natives after 1952. Probably the indigenous pottery will never again reappear.

[252] Each half of a petrol drum is large enough to contain a pig, or a turtle weighing
262 150 lbs, cut into pieces. Only the flesh of these animals is consumed by the
[231] Onge ; the nourishing broth is poured out onto the ground or left in the pot to be lapped up by the dogs. The Onge believe that broth is unhealthy and avoid drinking it.

251 No matter how prodigious the catch of sardines or other fish, unobtain-
[185] able at other times of the year, no attempt is made at storing part of it in view of future shortage. The Onge are unacquainted with methods for preserv-

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

Another item of material culture found during the above expedition was a few unbaked pots which show that the Jarawa manufacture earthenware articles – an art not reported so far from among the Onge. Coiled pottery was known among the Andamanese (MAN, 1932). It can be found in the Andamanese kitchen middens as well.

The present writer had the opportunity of being twice after the trail of the South Andaman Jarawa in the year 1948. During these two tours a large number of ethnographic objects of the Jarawa was collected. They are now deposited at the office of the Anthropological Survey of India [1], Indian Museum, Calcutta.

It was known that the Jarawa were using Bluff and Spike Islands as temporary halting stations in their to-and-fro migrations from South Andaman to Middle Andaman. In September 1938, a pregnant Jarawa woman and four young children (SARKAR, 1952) were captured while they were crossing on a raft on the coast off Bluff Island. A few of their haunts were known to the then officers of the local forest department.

In 1948 while the present writer was camping at Long Island, studying the Andamanese, two such opportunities-of visiting the Jarawa areas arose. The presence of the Jarawa north of Port Anson was reported to us. We left for Port Anson in a motor launch on March 7th 1948, in the company of an Andamanese – whose canoe was tied behind our launch – under the leadership, of Mr. Joseph, the then Sub-divisional Officer of the forest department. We had one gun only and a *dao* (billhook) each.

We passed through Homfray Strait and, reaching Port Anson, we went along the western coast of Middle Andaman. We then anchored our vessel off Foul Bay and came ashore in the Andamanese canoe. This flat open coast is known to be a good place for deer hunting and the animals could be seen from the sea. When the deer were not seen from the canoe we presumed that some human beings had been there shortly before; we suspected them to be Jarawa. Soon we discovered on the beach small footprints, which both Mr. JOSEPH and the Andamanese recognized as Jarawa ones. We traced them inside the jungle and came across a small fire which was still smouldering. A few yards away we found two bags for carrying water made of leaves (fig. 2) which were still wet. The few drops therein tasted sweet. We walked about for some time since the footprints could no longer be traced. There seemed to have been only two people. We then came to Bluff Island along the east coast of Spike Island but found nothing of the Jarawa.

Fig. 2

[1] Thanks are due to its Director, Professor NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE for his kindness in helping the writer with the illustrations of this paper.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

the felling of the tree, chiselling the lumber and processing it further to give the shape of a canoe. Buckets of wood are also constructed by them from the softwood tree. Two types of baskets are made, the smaller ones are more well-finished than the bigger ones. The former is known as *tolcoaga* and the later *tole-laya*. Such activities have introduced the use of dahs, chisels, and iron files among the Onges, from the iron pieces derived from the sea shores. The other important pieces of their craftsmanship are the beautiful weavings of fibre, tussel of yellow fibre used by the women in their front. However, the art of making the earthen pots has been completely forgotten.

The leisure in their lives has helped the development of some amount of aesthetic senses among the Onges. All the Onges men and women shave their heads with flakes of glass, obtained from the sea-borne glass bottles. The body of the Onges are also painted with white clay which save their skin from insect-bite while red paint serves medicinal purposes if some individual is having fever. In times of mourning, red orchre paint is a taboo.[1]

Early marriage is the custom. The widows are looked down upon by the society. Some incidents of widow murder and drowning are heard. In the married life, the husband is devoted to his wife and both the husband and wife work for collecting their food.

Dances and songs are in vogue and there are practically songs for every occasion and activity. Most of their songs are more plaintive than joyous.

There are three broad divisions of the Onges of the Little Andaman :

(1) *Giremeka-Gobeule* group inhabiting the northeastern coast of the island ;

(2) *Engakwale group* live in the interior of the islands ; and

(3) *Gireraragobeule group* live in the southern and western coasts of the islands.

In spite of all the limitations, the Onges have been considered as one of the happiest people of the world with plenty of food and water to eat and drink and with very few social cankers to fight with. But as is common to all other aborigines of the Andamans, a decline in their number is discernible.

The Sentinelese

The Sentinelese are the least known of all the aborigines of the Anda-

1 The Onge of the Little Andaman—A short guide book ; Anthropological Gallery, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 . AZ2 Andamans AZ2

The Onges are the most numerous of the three peoples surviving in the Andamans. Vigorous and apparently full of promise for the future they may well offer a suitable field for the application of eugenic measures designed to increase their numbers; this would be impossible with the Jarawas owing to their hostility towards outsiders, and the few remaining Arioto are nearly all of impure stock. If their confidence could be gained, it might be possible to encourage inter-marriage between the various groups, in the hope that fertility would increase and the ultimate total extinction of Onges, Jarawas and Arioto, would be prevented.

In the Andamanese, this physiological decline has been accompanied by cultural decadence, as my digs in the kitchen-middens all over the archipelago showed. The ancient pottery which came to light is proof enough; when one compares it with recent work the latter is indicative of secondary and not original primitiveness. The successive strata in the deposits show a gradual decline from earthenware clearly made from a very refined mix to crude ware with vegetable impurities and bits of stone left in the clay. The pots dating from ancient times were clearly well fired and the quality of the clay allowed them to have thin but nevertheless very strong walls. In the present-day ware, on the other hand, the wall has to be thick because of the coarseness of the clay, making the pots both heavy and easily broken. Moreover, firing is limited to drying the pots in the sun, and the clay is in fact only hardened when the pot is used for cooking.

Ignorance of fire-making in the Andamans may also stem from this cultural regression, as one of the effects of physiological and psychological decadence. Given the absence of magico-religious beliefs among the Andamanese, ignorance of fire-making cannot be attributed to any ritual taboo or veto. On the other hand, it is in sharp contrast to the possession of elements of cultural advance such as the bow, with highly developed arrows, the harpoon with its detachable point, and the outrigger canoe.

Few races are known, even in far distant times, which never had fire. *Sinanthropus* and nearly every fossil Man after him had fire, even if he was unable to create it and could only preserve it once received from some natural combustion. The Onges, while retaining a number of ethnic characteristics of the Palaeolithic era, have

It is clear from this that when they first arrived in the Andamans, the Negritos had no pottery; there are no signs of it at all in the lowest levels. Before they acquired the use of earthenware, perhaps for centuries, they baked their shellfish in ashes, so that the shells became calcified; but as time went on they came to boil them, as the islanders still do today. There is a clear distinction between the ashy, fragile, almost fossilized appearance of the former, and the cleaner solidity of the latter.

In the lowest level in which it appears, the pottery shows signs of careful working of the clay and good firing, degenerating towards more recent times. The uppermost layers reveal the crudest ware, the clay being impure, carelessly mixed, with bits of stone in it and hardly fired at all; it appears to have been merely dried by exposure to the sun and hardened in the course of normal use, as the Onges do today. The resulting pots break easily, despite their thickness, in contrast to the thinner, but much stronger, walls of earlier pottery. They were built up by the coil technique, exactly as they are made on Chowra, the one island in the Nicobars which specializes in pottery.

On Great Nicobar, among the Shom-Pen, these exists also another, cruder type of pottery which is made by a very primitive method. A basket is covered with clay, and hardened in the fire without being properly fired; fragments of this type of pottery retain the marks of the basket inside. The kitchen-middens of the Andamans contain no traces of any primitive stage of this kind; instead, a somewhat refined form of earthenware appears suddenly. There are traces of ornamentation, rows of small lines, usually roughly parallel. No such ornamentation appears on the crude ware of more recent date, however.

Andamanese pots have always been made with a pointed base which prevents their standing upright, so that they have to be carried in baskets, exactly like those of the Shom-Pen, who make their pots in complete ignorance of the Andamanese and Chowra pottery.

Pottery did not form part of the culture of the Negritos of ancient times. Neither the Semang of Malacca nor the Aetà of the Philippines, their last remnants, nor the Andamanese, had any. The custom of hollowing out logs for use as vessels, and the continuing use of the earth oven, doubtless made the absence of any pottery no hardship.

THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS

325 islanders, in the absence of any means of working it, have not fully realized.

3 IGNORANCE OF FIRE

372 The islanders' present ignorance of fire-making may possibly be the
174 result of cultural decline, but this is not certain. In the presence of the considerable additional evidence in favour of the antiquity of the Andamanese culture it is, however, more likely that it is genuine ignorance, persisting in a pre-lithic people.

4 ABSENCE OF SALT

174 Although there can be no proof, it can be reasonably postulated that very
263 primitive Man had no salt, and that in the Andamans this ignorance has persisted over thousands of years, owing to strict isolation. It is unlikely that the use of salt would have been completely lost, had it ever been introduced.

5 PRIMITIVE METHODS OF COOKING

252 Apart from the accidental and very recent introduction of petrol-drum
172 cooking, the Andamanese use only the most primitive form of earth oven. This method of cooking was certainly known in the Palaeolithic era; at the entrance to the well-known Barma Grande cave near Mentone I have myself seen in the basal layers a number of stones bearing the marks of fire, too numerous merely to have formed some sort of hearth, and clearly not used to support cooking-pots, as Palaeolithic Man had none which would have withstood heat. The form of earth oven still used throughout the Andamans is undoubtedly of extreme antiquity.

6 FOOD VESSELS

415 The people of the Andamans still use for honey hollowed-out logs simi-
285 lar to those seen in Palaeolithic wall paintings, which also depict baskets
172 very like those still in use throughout the archipelago. The art of basket-making can be traced back at least to the later Palaeolithic era.

7 USE OF POTTERY

323 As with the other Negrito peoples, pottery was unknown in the earliest
172 culture of the Andamans. Its appearance seems from the evidence of the

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

kitchen-middens to have been contemporaneous with the introduction of the pig, i.e. to have been introduced by outsiders. It would be possible, using radio carbon methods, to calculate this date more accurately, but on purely archaeological evidence the introduction of pottery would appear to have occurred some five thousand years ago.

8 ABSENCE OF CANNIBALISM

If we may accept the evidence of the kitchen-middens, there has never at any time been cannibalism in the Andamans, although the practice certainly existed in the later Palaeolithic era; the Andamanese must thus have been isolated in the archipelago long before the practice became widespread.

9 DRINK

The Andamanese ignorance of any drink other than water may be regarded as additional evidence of the great antiquity of their culture.

10 ABSENCE OF CLOTHING

The Jarawas of both sexes have always remained completely naked. The Onges have only in comparatively recent times adopted a form of genital covering for their womenfolk; this custom has spread as far as the north of Great Andaman, and it seems probable that the separation of the Jarawas from the Onges dates from this time.

11 ABSENCE OF TATTOOING

All primitive peoples who are habitually completely naked adorn the body in some way. The Onges have never progressed beyond the early stage of painting themselves with ochre, and do not tattoo. Their sole ornaments are small necklaces of tusk shells, strips of bark, and sometimes flowers. In all this they resemble the Tasmans (see, however, p. 143 for certain important differences), who seem to have remained in an equally early stage of cultural development.

12 TOTEMISM AND THE CLAN

Here again the complete absence of any traces appears to indicate isolation before the spread of these very ancient concepts. Neither the Onges nor the Jarawas have ever progressed beyond the stage of independent groups of families.